1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526 Fig. 25 shows one side of a small ball painted yellow, on which is a rude embroidery in red, yellow, and green quills, representing a bird. On the 532 opposite side is a red quilled cross. The bird-embroidery recalls the quill-ornamentation of an Arapaho ghost-dance drumstick and hand implement, both of them with stuffed heads of painted skin; also the painting of a crow on an Arapaho ghost-dance ball.[1]

526'

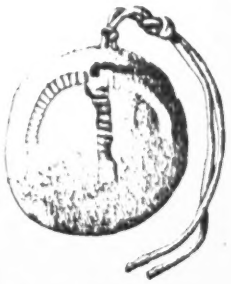

Fig. 25 (50-1731). Embroidered and Painted Ball. Diameter, 7 cm.

A game of throwing willow sticks on the ice, to see who could slide them farthest, was played by women. These sticks were sometimes tipped with buffalo-calves' horns. Young men, as well as women, sometimes threw horn-pointed sticks on the ice. It is said that women used long sticks, young men short sticks.

Children slid on the ice at a place they had made smooth. A boy and then a girl would slide alternately. When the whole party had slid one way, they would return, sliding in the opposite direction.

A toy made to slide on the ice consists of a bone to which two feathered sticks are attached at a diverging angle. It is called "tafaxtsiteebya^{n}." The object is to bounce or slide the implement over the ice as far as possible. This type of object is found among a number of Plains tribes.

493 526 357 Boys' sleds for coasting on hillsides were made of several buffalo-ribs held together at each end by a long thong winding in and out around the two halves of a split stick. A buffalo-tail was tied behind. These sleds were called "sö^{n}w^{n}haana^{n}." When a man presented such a sled to another man's boy, he received presents from the boy's parents. In early summer, when the grass was green, toboggans of rawhide were used on the hillsides. The front was held up and bent over, and the bottom soon became very smooth.

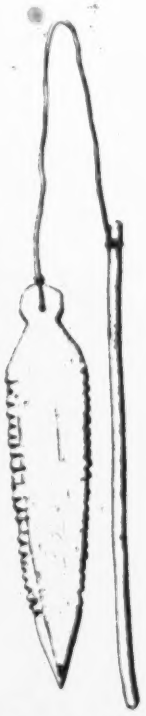

Fig. 26 (50-1788). Bull-roarer. Length, 58 cm.

224 401 357 Slings were used by boys for killing birds and small animals. The entire sling was made of skin. The thongs were passed through holes near the

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 393, Fig. 151.

CHAPTER VIII

CHILDHOOD

858 In the days before the buffalo disappeared and before formal schooling was available, childhood, it was said, for girls was shorter and for boys was longer than at present. A girl was ordinarily [582] given in marriage before she was twelve years old—certainly before she attained physiological maturity. A boy on the other hand, though seemingly anxious to participate in hunting and in war as soon as he was able, was not forced to bear the full responsibilities of adulthood until the end of adolescence. While there was considerable variation from family to family in the amount of time required of children in training for practical tasks, all enjoyed a considerable amount of "free time."

PLAY

857 Singer and Coming Daylight, the two oldest of our informants, 526 in recalling the amusements and pastimes of their youth, decided that sliding down hills was one of the most pleasurable as it could be done at any time of the year. In winter, when there was snow, [493] the boys used a kind of sled made by lashing buffalo rib-bones together. Girls managed just as well by simply sitting on their robes and holding between their legs the end which usually hung free. In summer a stiff buffalo hide was used for sliding down the grassy slopes.[1] When the water was frozen, boys and girls alike [524] skated with their feet on the ice, thus clearing a slick surface on which to spin their tops made of horn.

857 Swimming, however, was the great sport in summer. Girls left 526 their dresses close to the bank, those of the older girls in a neat 481 row closest to the edge and those of the smaller girls in the next row. Beginners used the dog-paddle, but the boys developed profi-

[1] For this and some other types of amusement, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 190–91.